

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF AUTUMN DELEGATE MEETING
HELD AT HEAD OFFICE ON 9th and 10th OCTOBER, 1982

ATTENDANCES PER STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Saturday, 9th October: 2.15 p.m. 21 delegates sitting: Branches not represented: Edinburgh, Haringey, Paddington, S.W. London
5.15 p.m.: 23 delegates sitting: Branches not represented: Edinburgh, Haringey, S.W. London
Sunday, 10th October: 12.10 p.m.: 24 delegates sitting: Not represented: Edinburgh, Haringey, W. London
3.45 p.m.: 25 delegates sitting: Not represented: Edinburgh, Haringey, W. London

COLLECTIONS: Saturday: £25.00: Sunday: £25.54

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Com. P. Bennett (Bolton) was elected Chairman and Com. D. Donnelly (Glasgow) was elected Deputy Chairman. It was agreed that Standing Orders Committee act as Tellers.

Standing Orders Committee requested permission for delegates of Birmingham and Paddington to sit as their Forms 'C' were not completed in time due to circumstances beyond the control of their branches. This was agreed on the motion of Cottis (Southend) and Valor (Glasgow).

ORDER OF BUSINESS: The delegates agreed to take the Agenda as presented, except for Items 7 (a) to (d), inclusive, which would be taken as first business on Sunday morning.

Standing Orders Committee requested a ruling from the meeting as to whether Com. R. Cox (Guildford) could sit as a delegate, having been a member of the EC this year to 23rd March.

RESOLUTION - D'Arcy (Camden) and Cook (Birmingham) "That in view of the exceptional circumstances, Com. R. Cox be permitted to sit as a delegate." CARRIED 14 - 1

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT TO AUTUMN DELEGATE MEETING

AUDITORS REPORT: Hopwood (Croydon) queried £461 for Conference/Delegates' expenses, as this did not accord with amounts granted to branches per EC Minutes. Also figure for rates.

E. Walters (Auditor) and A. Waite (Treasurer) explained Rates figure and also that the Conference/Delegates' expenses figure included hall hire.

C. Skelton (Central) said Party should increase income from propaganda meeting collections.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

FINANCE: (a) East London and (b) Croydon.

(a) P. Deutz (E. London): We should not be dependent on legacies or reluctant to increase dues. Not quite enough caution exercised when making grants. We should not keep large bank balance - it should be used.

H. Walters (Islington) drew attention to differences between balances held by branches from £9.25 to £396. Islington thinks most of a branch's funds should be forwarded to HO.

C. Skelton (Central): Branches used to make regular donations to HO.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): Asked whether the £250 Central Branch balance was available for Party use.

C. Slapper (Acting Central Branch Secretary): Central Branch funds are paid into the General Fund.

RESOLUTION - Hopwood and Lawrence (Croydon): "The ADM recommends the EC to draw the attention of branches to the undesirability of holding large sums of money unless branches are planning activity."

P. Lawrence (Croydon): Branches have funds all over the place in banks: at the least this money might be earning interest in the General Fund.

D'Arcy (Camden): The EC is making all sorts of grants including £75 for a trip to Paris. Active branches should generate their own funds. There are items appearing in the account which never used to appear. The Treasurer is saying it is costing £20,000 a year to run the Party.

C. Slapper (Islington): The Paris trip was a propaganda one. Branches engaged in activity are the ones with the lowest balances and those who have a lot of money don't seem to be running activity.

E. Walters (Islington): Branches which are active spend what they have got and therefore ask for grants. Branches should try to finance their activity but if the money's not there, there is no harm in asking the EC.

Cook (Birmingham): The grant to Bolton was for the Weekend School which was one of the best enterprises this year. Propaganda is not self-financing, it is an expense on the Party. Much activity is being done by members who are unemployed.

Atkinson (EC): The EC is not being reckless: it is doing what all ECs have done in the past, that is, to examine each case on its merits.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): The suggestion that branches should not donate money to HO because of the EC making grants is nonsense. There are increases in expenditure: the majority is to expand propaganda - it is not reckless.

RESOLUTION CARRIED 10 - 0

(b) P. Lawrence (Croydon): The Party has set up funds for particular purposes in the past, particularly the Parliamentary Fund, but the Party has never accepted money with strings attached, and Croydon thinks the terms of reference empower the committee to elicit funds for particular purposes and is against this practice.

McLaughlin (Bolton): Branch more in favour of a general fund than specific funds because it would interfere with democracy. We decide on activity not on the funds available for specific purposes. It should be the decision of the members irrespective of how much is available in a particular fund.

E. Cottis (Southend): Now that we have money available the EC should try to guide things (with Conference and members in general) so that the Party is as self-financing as possible, with a view to putting aside money left to the Party for special purposes to extend the horizons of the Party rather than to finance day-to-day affairs, which would see the gradual eating away of donations. We could use it for a super pamphlet or some special activity so we can see the benefit of that money.

Cook (Birmingham): There is an argument for a Party Funds Committee to point things out from time to time but to have special funds so that if they are short the activity cannot happen, is wrong.

L. Cox (EC): You don't need a special fund for particular activity: all you need is the impetus from branches and the Party instructing the EC.

Atkinson (EC): Some members were panicked when the Treasurer said that Party funds were being drained away. The idea was that a Funds Committee could advise the EC from time to time on the financial position.

D'Arcy (Carden): For years branches managed to run activities without coming to HO. It is only since we started getting legacies that members don't seem to bother. We made appeals when necessary. This goes a lot deeper than collecting money: you have half the membership with different ideas and half the Party are not prepared to make sacrifices for the Party.

C. Skelton (Central): The Auditors' report shows we're £8,000 down and this will rise with inflation. We are still living on the dead.

Howell (EC): Outdoor meetings did not cost money but what we do today costs more. Party members sometimes contribute more than they can afford. Let's try to get money from non-members: we can experiment and appeal through the SS and other meetings. We can't afford to be idealistic.

Hopwood (Croydon): Branches often in the past asked for grants - they were not as large, but things were not so expensive. It is good to be able to give expenses for members from outside London to come to the EC etc. It would have been good to have sent more members to support Com. Buick in Paris in his valuable work in France. When the money is spent we will have to look for more. We are using money wisely. We have more members now who are unemployed.

EDINBURGH BRANCH sent fraternal greetings to ADM. They were unable to send delegates, although they had hoped to be able to do so.

ITEMS 5 (a) and (b)

Cook (Birmingham): Concern about the size of Central Branch: it is just a collection of members all over the place. Many of them do not live so far from a branch that they could not be in communication. Branch secretaries should be in touch with local members with the possibility of occasionally meeting with CB members. There are all sorts of reasons for belonging to CB.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): You can't tell members which branch to be in. There is a need for CB. The report of the Ad Hoc Committee is very useful. Croydon is in favour of the recommendations for CB representation at Conferences, to be able to place items on the Agenda. Their record of votes should be in proportion to the actual numbers who vote, i.e. not a block vote by the few active members on behalf of the whole of CB.

Donnelly (Glasgow): There are CB members in Glasgow for various reasons. The CB secretary has unnecessary work. CB are special citizens of the Party, getting their

reports. Branches taking in CB members would have to alter their quorum, communicate with them, collect their dues etc., but it is something that needs to be looked at. Glasgow has several members now living in Doncaster, but the branch continues to supply them with literature etc. Dissolution and spreading the members round other branches is the only way out.

C. Slapper (Islington): Branch opposed to Birmingham proposals. Most CB members not in travelling distance of organised branches. We would risk losing some members. Eventually CB will disappear through the creation of local branches, through these members becoming active. CB should have organisers selected from their members to organise groups. CB should have organisers selected from their members to organise groups. Something should go on the 1983 Conference Agenda.

C. Moss (Swansea): Would CB members be likely to form more branches if there was not a CP - they may sit back and be content.

C. Cox (N.W. London): Branch agrees problem has to be looked at, with the possibility of dissolving it because of its size. Communications difficult but would be less so if carried out by branches. The 34 active members do want to be recognised as a branch and seek block representation.

H. Cottis (Southend): This has been discussed from time to time but CB works satisfactorily without too much difficulty in communication. Branches have been formed out of CB members and this is what it should be all about. We are against Birmingham proposal.

C. Lovatt (Islington): I was a CB member. There is a motivation problem whatever branch they are in. We should aim at getting as much activity as possible in particular areas and it is important for CB members to get support from a local branch and perhaps more advice from HO on how to get activity going. Pointless to talk of sending CB members into other branches. A healthy branch does not need them, but they can give support and advice to a group.

P. Howard (Camden): Members in Norwich and Lowestoft have not been contacted about activity in their area.

D'Arcy (Camden): A section of the Party is pushing to turn CB into something it cannot be. We should amend the Rules and instead of describing it as a branch we should describe it as a Central Register for members who want to be associated with the Party: it would no longer be a haven for people who wish to opt out of normal Party activity. It would exclude them from taking part in the Conference voting but we should try to devise some other mechanism for this. It should only be for members joining the Party, not transferring into it after they have joined. There is no complete answer to it here.

C. Slapper (Acting CB Secretary): The kind of proposals made seem to take a dangerous step in terms of a two-tier membership; one lot on a register who would be disenfranchised. The 170 members' addresses should be geographically analysed to group them. If sorted out into regions, we could put them in touch with each other and send addresses to nearest branches.

C. Skelton (Central): I have moved from branches to CB on several occasions. My nearest branch does not communicate with me. People come to our meetings and send for literature from all over the country through advertising. It would deter people from joining if they knew they could only go on a register or be pressed to join a branch at some distance. The Ad Hoc Committee proposals would give disproportionate voting strength to CB.

Atkinson (Ad Hoc Committee on CB): Out of the 34 who showed interest in having representation at Conference, they would represent 3 delegates. They would elect their own organisers and delegates, and correspond and formulate items for agendas just like other branches.

B. Johnson (Ad Hoc Committee): There is a myth about block voting. CB would only have delegates in the same way as other branches. Delegates will be elected at Conference out of those present. I disagree with the idea of a register. The majority of the Party recognises there is an anomaly: a register would be undemocratic. We want a three-way connection between local branch, CB member and C.B. itself.

L. Cox (EC): It was hoped that ADM might give some guidance as to whether the proposed questionnaire should be distributed to members.

McNeeney (Ad Hoc Committee): We originally thought there should be a Party Poll which the EC could have called. However, it was later felt that a Poll was not necessary. If the questionnaire is completed, a clear idea of what members want should emerge and branches can put something on Conference Agenda.

Honwood (Croydon): Asked for clarification of the meaning of Rule 11 where it refers to members 'who reside where no local branch exists, or who, for approved reasons....'

Cook (Birmingham): Discussion has shown enormous amount of double-think. If suggestion are feasible, how much more feasible through a local branch. If you make CB a better place to live, it will get larger. If CB members are active and contact local branches, let them be members of those local branches.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): Two kinds of status for members is not really on. CB will grow.

EC reports. Branches taking in CB members would have to alter their quorum, communicate with them, collect their dues etc., but it is something that needs to be looked at. Glasgow has several members now living in Doncaster, but the branch continues to supply them with literature etc. Dissolution and spreading the members round other branches is the only way out.

C. Slapper (Islington): Branch opposed to Birmingham proposals. Most CB members not in travelling distance of organised branches. We would risk losing some members. Eventually CB will disappear through the creation of local branches, through these members becoming active. CB should have organisers selected from their members to organise groups. CB should have organisers selected from their members to organise groups. Something should go on the 1983 Conference Agenda.

C. Moss (Swansea): Would CB members be likely to form more branches if there was not a CP - they may sit back and be content.

C. Cox (N.W. London): Branch agrees problem has to be looked at, with the possibility of dissolving it because of its size. Communications difficult but would be less so if carried out by branches. The 34 active members do want to be recognised as a branch and seek block representation.

H. Cottis (Southend): This has been discussed from time to time but CB works satisfactorily without too much difficulty in communication. Branches have been formed out of CB members and this is what it should be all about. We are against Birmingham proposal.

C. Lovatt (Islington): I was a CB member. There is a motivation problem whatever branch they are in. We should aim at getting as much activity as possible in particular areas and it is important for CB members to get support from a local branch and perhaps more advice from HO on how to get activity going. Pointless to talk of sending CB members into other branches. A healthy branch does not need them, but they can give support and advice to a group.

P. Howard (Camden): Members in Norwich and Lowestoft have not been contacted about activity in their area.

D'Arcy (Camden): A section of the Party is pushing to turn CB into something it cannot be. We should amend the Rules and instead of describing it as a branch we should describe it as a Central Register for members who want to be associated with the Party: it would no longer be a haven for people who wish to opt out of normal Party activity. It would exclude them from taking part in the Conference voting but we should try to devise some other mechanism for this. It should only be for members joining the Party, not transferring into it after they have joined. There is no complete answer to it here.

C. Slapper (Acting CB Secretary): The kind of proposals made seem to take a dangerous step in terms of a two-tier membership; one lot on a register who would be disenfranchised. The 170 members' addresses should be geographically analysed to group them. If sorted out into regions, we could put them in touch with each other and send addresses to nearest branches.

C. Skelton (Central): I have moved from branches to CB on several occasions. My nearest branch does not communicate with me. People come to our meetings and send for literature from all over the country through advertising. It would deter people from joining if they knew they could only go on a register or be pressed to join a branch at some distance. The Ad Hoc Committee proposals would give disproportionate voting strength to CB.

Atkinson (Ad Hoc Committee on CB): Out of the 34 who showed interest in having representation at Conference, they would represent 3 delegates. They would elect their own organisers and delegates, and correspond and formulate items for agendas just like other branches.

B. Johnson (Ad Hoc Committee): There is a myth about block voting. CB would only have delegates in the same way as other branches. Delegates will be elected at Conference out of those present. I disagree with the idea of a register. The majority of the Party recognises there is an anomaly: a register would be undemocratic. We want a three-way connection between local branch, CB member and CB itself.

L. Cox (EC): It was hoped that ADM might give some guidance as to whether the proposed questionnaire should be distributed to members.

McNeeney (Ad Hoc Committee): We originally thought there should be a Party Poll which the EC could have called. However, it was later felt that a Poll was not necessary. If the questionnaire is completed, a clear idea of what members want should emerge and branches can put something on Conference Agenda.

Hopwood (Croydon): Asked for clarification of the meaning of Rule 11 where it refers to members 'who reside where no local branch exists, or who, for approved reasons....'

Cook (Birmingham): Discussion has shown enormous amount of double-think. If suggestions are feasible, how much more feasible through a local branch. If you make CB a better place to live, it will get larger. If CB members are active and contact local branches, let them be members of those local branches.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): Two kinds of status for members is not really on. CB will grow.

lots of new members through publicity so we will have to make some accommodation for them. Johnson overkills this question of not getting items on agendas: CB members have as much possibility of this as any other member, i.e. through a branch. There is a worry about block vote but it can be dealt with by voting strength strictly in accordance with voting members. We will come up with something on the Conference Agenda which should be given sympathetic consideration.

CENTRAL ORGANISER: No discussion

EDUCATION COMMITTEE & EDUCATION ORGANISERS:

H. Walters (Islington): When education classes have been organised at HO, attendance of members has been deplorable.

C. Slapper (Islington): Draw attention to classes being run by certain branches.

Young (EC): I don't think they have the right idea and have made a hopeless mess. We don't want bulletins which members cannot understand - they choke people off. We need tutorials not just passive listeners. I would suggest Marxist study groups.

E.C. ATTENDANCES:

Cook (Birmingham): Pointed out that Com. Double's absences from EC meetings were largely due to the rail strikes earlier in the year.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & PARTY OFFICERS:

ITEM 1 (a): Howell (Guildford - spoke with the permission of delegates): Members often do not know who the candidates are. Democracy needs better voting. If a complete record of voting was provided, it would help members when voting at EC elections. He suggested a sheet like a register which could be circulated now and then.

Hart (EC/Minutes Secretary): Replied to a direct question re practicality or otherwise of this idea. The sheet would not indicate the matter which had been voted on. Most decisions of the EC are fairly pedestrian. If votes recorded by divisions in EC Minutes, much time would be taken up in recording them at the table, and in lengthening the Minutes by including them. Any member of the EC can ask for a division on any matter.

Donnelly (Glasgow): There is enough information on important issues when divisions are called for.

C. Skelton (Central): There is nothing to stop any member writing to the EC asking why members voted in the way they did.

Howell (Guildford): EC members are the only ones who can ask for a division.

ITEM (b) H. Cottis (Southend): In some organisations a Treasurer and Secretary would automatically be on an Executive Committee. A Treasurer should be in contact with the EC at all times. The branch thinks this was the case, and if so, we should return to this position. The EC would remain at 14, inclusive of the Party Officers.

Hopwood (Croydon): Whether the officers are on the EC or not, such officers should be more available to the EC on Tuesday evenings.

ITEM (c): H. Walters (Islington): We justly claim that the Party has the most democratic organisation, but a large number of members fail to vote. Some members say it doesn't really matter who is on the EC so long as there is one. We should look at this in relation to our propaganda. It is a poor state of affairs when we have returns of 50% or less.

H. Cottis (Southend): Members have not had encouragement to use their votes. Southend branch members complete their ballot papers and they are returned together. I think members should be able to vote "Against" and send in the paper.

D'Arcy (Camden): Members used to be elected to the EC after spending a few years learning about the Party and procedure, and they became known to members generally. This meant there were members better qualified than others. At present you get who you can - people who are prepared to go on Tuesdays. That is the reason for the low poll.

Hopwood (Ballot Committee): The figures for the last ballot are not significantly different from previous years. Camden branch members have excluded themselves from serving on the EC by holding their branch meetings on Tuesdays. It is extremely good to have members on the EC from outside London.

P. Howard (Camden): The branch meeting ends at 8 p.m. so anyone elected to the EC could easily attend it.

Edwards (W. London): It is quite simple why people do not vote. Branch has members not seen from one year's end to the other, so they don't know names on the ballot form and don't vote.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): 50% ballot is pretty good. The importance of democracy is that everyone can vote if they want to.

H. Walters (Islington): The least a Party member can do is to be active by registering a vote.

Howell (EC): Cook (Birmingham): The branch is of the opinion that the EC can delegate its business so as to avoid weekly meetings. It is onerous to travel from Birmingham each week, as one member is doing at present.

Cox (EC): If meeting fortnightly enabled more members to serve on the EC then there would be more nominations of members willing to stand. We could see if it gets more nominations from outside London.

Atkinson (General Secretary/EC): Rules state that the EC can meet fortnightly. EC business can sometimes be got through quickly. If Conference ruled the EC meets fortnightly they would have to get through the business, but at present it takes weekly meetings.

Howell (EC): We could be more disciplined and this could be decided if the Party could hear some tapes of EC meetings. There is a lot of inefficiency.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): Branch opposed as there are matters not covered directly on the EC meeting: a lot of activity on Tuesday night - sub-committees, producing reports and drafts for EC consideration. If EC fortnightly, the place would be more dead and it could delay decisions. There is a lot of latitude for EC members to attend.

H. Cotts (Southend): Having attended recent EC meetings there seemed no case to cut number of meetings, but if it meant sub-committees taking over some work, OK. On balance, once a week should stand.

McLeavy (Islington): Branch thinks EC could not get through work fortnightly. Branch felt the Treasurer was not always present when the EC was meeting and suggested a clause in the Treasurer's terms of reference regarding that officer's attendance. If EC met fortnightly it would limit the Treasurer coming more than she does already.

A. White (Treasurer): Stated she comes early to HQ to do her work and leaves early because of the distance she has to travel.

C. Cox (N.W. London): A lot of work could be dealt with by sub-committees. Fortnightly meetings could help members from out of London.

P. Deutz (N. London): If reason for fortnightly meetings is to enable out of London members to stand, could they not be allowed to attend slightly less meetings without disqualification.

Cook (Birmingham): Importance of continuity - member who misses a meeting takes a long time to catch up. Because EC meets weekly, other committees expect to meet the EC. Many EC members on committees are hard pressed to attend weekly. Work expands to fill the available time.

FOrms 'A' SECRETARY COMMITTEE: No discussion

GENERAL SECRETARY: L. Cox (EC): Suggested future General Secretary's reports should include the names of committee members with their reports.

HEAD OFFICE ASSISTANT: Cook (Birmingham): Branch particularly impressed at the smooth running of H.O. in recent times and the sentence in the report should be underlined.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE: No discussion

GROUPS ORGANISER: No discussion

NEW PAMPHLETS COMMITTEE: D'Arcy (Camden): Asked whether the NPC are taking steps to correct the error in 'Is a Third World War Inevitable?' of the date of the Daily Worker quotation (p.13).

Cook (NPC): All errors are regrettable but it was felt this was not sufficiently large to insert an erratum slip.

L. Cox (EC): Although the date is wrong, the CP's statement stands as an expose of their attitude.

C. Skelton (Central): This error makes all supportive quotations suspect.

C. Slapper (Islington): The error has been conceded by the NPC.

Coleman (NPC): Of all the literature produced over the last six months, one error is found to criticise: this is a compliment to the Committee.

Donnelly (Glasgow): A valid point has been made: if you change the date you have to change 'about to be' before the quotation.

RESOLUTION - Donnelly (Glasgow) and H. Cotts (Southend): "That the ADM recommends that the EC produce an erratum slip as follows: Delete 'about to be' and delete '7th May 1945' and insert '7th August 1945'."

RESOLUTION CARRIED 21 - 0

T.D'Arcy (N.W. London): Branch took up with the EC proposed pamphlet on Ireland because Conference 1975 turned down a pamphlet on the subject.

Cook (NPC): A member of the SP of I has been working for a long time on the pamphlet on Ireland and the NPC has begun looking at it. The EC will decide whether to publish it or not: it must be vetted by the EC.

L. Cox (EC): Conference 1975 decided that the draft then being considered be published. We now have, I understand, an entirely new draft.

C. Skelton (Central): Complained about lack of reply from the NPC re her attitude on trade unions. Said she stopped writing for the SS because the EC endorsed the NPC's reply to her.

E.D'Arcy (N.W. London): Branch still waiting to hear which Conference resolution was referred to by the NPC re attitude to trade unions.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): One reason why the previous draft pamphlet on Ireland was not published was that it was felt at the time that the violence might not last long and we would be stuck with the pamphlet. It was also very long and dealt with the historical background at great length.

Cook (NPC): In view of the previous experience it was decided to restrict the length of the new draft to about 8,000 words.

SUNDAY, 10th OCTOBER: Items under 7 on the Agenda, as agreed yesterday, were first business.

PRINCIPLES, POLICY & THEORY:

(a) C. Slapper (Islington): Quoted at length from branch circular on how the workers can become aware of democratic self-organisation through the creation of self-run trade unions. We should renounce the religious and nationalistic aspects but when workers independently organise themselves democratically, we must as Socialists state that it can only succeed if state power is conquered and Socialism established. This means critical, qualified, support.

Young (EC): "Critical" and "qualified" is still support. You don't avoid the problem by giving qualified support. Once you say support you commit yourself. We should preserve our independence and say we do not support the general ethos of Solidarity.

C. Skelton (Central): Islington's position goes from one side to another. They debated Solidarity with Solidarity but now say we should give critical support to Solidarity. Support should be based on a clear recognition of workers' position under capitalism and oppose unions who support capitalism. Solidarity was seen as a political threat by the regime - many aims nothing to do with trade unionism, and not democratic. We should look for Socialists in Poland who we can line up with.

May (N.W. London): Asked why the word "support" was left out of the SS article.

Critchfield (SSPC): Probably because the word gets members into such chaos.

May (N.W. London): If the word doesn't mean anything, or rather a lot of things, why use it? NPC say they may be opposed to the political activity of unions: we are opposed to the political activities. We shall always be opposed to them until they are composed of Socialists. We don't support the political demands of Solidarity.

Donnelly (Glasgow): May says we would not support anything as a Party unless they wanted to do away with the capitalist system. Of course we do, and have done: it doesn't make us reformist. We support workers striking for higher wages. The proposition should be that this ADM agrees with the articles which have appeared in the SS because they are in line with what I understand to be the Party's case. Of course we are not in favour of religion or reformism: of course Solidarity are not Socialists, but they are members of the working class.

Coleman (NPC): It is not just the word "support". The original statement was edited by the EC when May was a member of it, and stated "with sympathy and admiration", words which mean very much the same thing. Polish workers were on strike for the first time and we were able to say something to them, and we translated and sent leaflets to Poland. We should think critically: we can't just pick out a cliché from those accumulated over the years.

D'Arcy (Camden): The Party has always supported workers organising into trade unions to resist the encroachments of capitalism, but should always keep completely free from any of the political elements which might cotton on to such movements. Is Solidarity a trade union? In my view, no. If we support the trade union aspect of it - OK. Solidarity appealed to western governments for support. You can't apply a critical attitude when you really don't know what the situation is.

Cook (NPC/Birmingham): The prime function of the leaflet is to go to British workers, not Polish ones, to explain the issue. We are not standing on some sideline watching the working class's historical development. We were supporting Polish workers' struggle for wages and conditions, but critical of religious and other political aims.

Atkinson (EC): The Party has been examining critically the world in which we live. What union does not support capitalism?

G. Kerr (E. London): Party has always been very careful not to do anything which might attract support from anyone other than Socialists. If you use the word "support" you are not being careful: you are likely to get support from non-Socialists.

McMeney (Central): The 1905 Resolution, which was lost, stated that the Party could only support those unions which were in line with the Object and D of P. Another such

worker resolution we
Party who think we
organisations the
in all sorts of
Wood (Central)
union

weaker resolution was adopted and became the Party's case. There are people in the Party who think we should go back to the 1905 hard line. If you don't support the organisations the working class throws up - look back into history - what would you have had to oppose - the Chartists? They were also a messy organisation with fingers in all sorts of pies.

Wood (Central): Main difficulty is people find it hard to differentiate between trade unions on the industrial field and when they enter the political field. Workers under capitalism need trade unions to get rises and defend their living conditions. Some trade union actions must be opposed, e.g. when unions opposed Polish miners coming to Britain.

Simpkins (S.W. London): Some members are opposing the concept of any support of trade unions. Solidarity was a trade union in concept. All trade unions are nationalistic to a greater or lesser degree: they could not be otherwise, in capitalist society.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): There have not been great differences of view in this discussion but general agreement that we support trade unions where these actions are consistent with working class interests. Solidarity seems to present itself as a trade union, most of its activities being centred towards improving conditions.

C. Slapper (Islington): We are trying to say that we should never give absolute support or be absolutely in opposition - we should give critical support. It is true that Solidarity is not entirely democratic - nor is the Socialist Party. Com. Skelton finds the banning of Solidarity appalling, so she is not so clear about her attitude. The whole movement of consciousness for Socialism has more than one side to it. You can be intellectual about it but feelings are also involved in an historical awareness of ourselves as workers.

Standing Orders Committee asked the delegates if they would permit S.W. London delegates to sit, as their credentials had not been completed at a branch meeting. This was agreed on a motion by Donnelly (Glasgow) and Lennon (N.E. Branch).

(b) McLeavy (Islington): The branch queried the distinction between 'ownership', 'possession' and 'control' of the means of wealth production. What would be the effect if we interchanged the words in the D of P. Branch view is that ownership is the mere legal formality whereby the ruling class exercise control. Rather than issuing property titles, the Russian state proclaims "social ownership" as a defence of collective State control. Private capitalism is one form of wage-labour-capital relationship: in state capitalism relationships are the same.

Donnelly (Glasgow): I always understood that class was determined by ownership, irrespective of the consumption of wealth.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): This argument seems to centre on "Who is the Capitalist Class in Russia?". Did anything come of that discussion?

Cook (Birmingham): To try to define too closely ownership in Russia, or, say, the Vatican, is to waste our time. Do not put undue weight on words.

Coleman (EC): If there is a capitalist class in Russia who own the means of production, outside of the CP, where is the precise information on who these people are. There are rich people in Russia who don't have to work, but wage-labour and capital is about exploitation and the state in Russia regulate this. People outside Russia invest in Russia, but control is with the State. The capitalist in Britain has the right to pass on his wealth although that happens to some extent in Russia.

Skelton (Central): I am in favour of the word "possession" - being the opposite of the word "alienation": workers are alienated from the means of production.

D'Arcy (Camden): The D of P and the Party are quite clear on this. Economic interest denotes class and it is as true of Russia as of other countries.

McNeeney (Central): One way to describe the capitalist class in Russia is by saying that the elite managers etc. form a class monopoly. The two views in the Party can be reconciled by using the fact of ownership as in the D of P. In the so-called totalitarian regimes, they cannot get final title to the ownership. If this happened, the game would be up and everyone would know there was no difference between private and State capitalism.

L. Cox (EC): It was thought sufficient that the D of P referred to ownership in Clause 1 because ownership implied control. In Russia, the situation is slightly different because you can't pin individual legal right of ownership and control or look up this information in a companies registry.

P. Deutz (E. London): The Object of the Party clearly states common ownership and democratic control.

Donnelly (Glasgow): The Moscow State Bank will pay interest on money invested, and people do this and live on it. In feudal society, the owners owned but did not control - that's why there was a revolution.

C. Slapper (Islington): It is important in the D of P to have these different terms

to cover different situations and this showed foresight. In Russia the State does not give legal title to individuals but ownership is on a corporate basis.

(c) and (d): P. Lawrence (Croydon): A circular has been distributed by Croydon branch in reply to Haringey's circular of last Easter, and I have distributed another circular containing suggestions for a democratic administration of socialism. There is concern about the dominant assumption in the Party that the issue of Socialism does not arise now but in terms of the organisation of production, only arises in the future, and that there is nothing we can say now which would be relevant. I think this has very serious disadvantages for our propaganda. I call it a futurist attitude in that it confines the possibility of socialism to the future. This view concedes society to the capitalist class and drains our propaganda of all immediate relevance. We should examine how the structures of production could be adapted to production for use. Articles in the SS often merely bark at the heels of capitalist politicians. We should engage in dealing with how production for use would operate.

R. Cox (Guildford): Branch has circulated on this in response to Steel. We concentrated on one aspect of central planning, i.e. that total world production would be decided in advance and implemented as a world plan. This would mean one administration centre. Branch opposed this as components of production are so inter-dependent that if one aspect changed, the whole plan would have to be revised. Also it is against the requirements of a Socialist society that the majority understand what is required for the plan and would mean that labour would have to be centrally directed. Ex-comrade Steel in a recent circular says that central planning is the Party's case. These expressions should be more carefully quoted in our literature. We strongly support Croydon's sentiments that we need to examine more closely the possibilities of organisation in Socialism and how it might operate so as to impress on people that it is not a distant dream but a practical possibility.

H. Walters (Islington): It seems to me that there must be some kind of organisation on a world basis - not telling people what to do. If we want, say, a gas pipeline, there could be a world conference of scientists etc. to find out whether it would be practicable, advise the rest of the world and a democratic decision could be made on a world-wide scale.

Cook (Birmingham): Scope for an enormous amount of discussion. Steel is not a member of this Party. He has shown that his main objective is to try and split this Party, partly by prompting this type of discussion. He has gone through old SS finding some explicit and some implicit statements with which he is trying to saddle the Party. He thinks Socialism cannot and will not work, and that capitalism is the only system which will work, and the reason is that the Party does not know how Socialism will work. Let's discuss it ourselves in groups but to try and hammer out a policy is not the right way and I warn members against this.

Marsh (EC): Are we in principle in favour of central planning and control? I think we must say we are not, and we should convey this in our propaganda. I don't think we can go so far as Com. Lawrence would like in defining a system which appears hierarchical - although he would deny this. Need for a great deal of discussion and research. You cannot define a system for undefined problems. There is a matter of democracy here in decision-making.

Donnelly (Glasgow): This is a waste of time: the reason people don't join the Party is because they are imbued with other ideas.

P. Deutz (E. London): There would be both central and local planning. When Socialist ideas spread further, people who have experience within capitalism will know how those ideas can be applied. It does help if we look at the problems now and say how those problems can be solved now - when Socialism comes we will be able to tackle the problems immediately - whether this is now or later. We should have some specific examples and ideas of how we can solve these problems now.

G. Kerr (E. London): Best way of getting across what Socialism will be like is to say what it won't be like. We cannot give a blueprint.

RESOLUTION - McLeavy and C. Slapper (Islington): "ADM recommends the EC to call for nominations for a Committee to prepare a report on positive statements which the Party can make on the organisation of production for use. This report should be available for branches to consider before Conference 1983."

McLeavy (Islington): The idea of production for use is a logical extension of our thinking. A committee would get on with the work as people are interested in this question both inside and outside the Party.

P. Lawrence (Croydon): It is not about the future. We have means of production and structure of production. The Party's case is that this is never now. It is not as massive a job as you might think. Capitalism does not change so rapidly that any

original
d. not
and
(C)
are also
main
a p
is

ormulated will be redundant next week. The options for production for use will not be all that wide. Let's get discussion material distributed, but on the basis of the adaptation of the existing structure of production.

Camden: A view held by the Party which I think is incorrect is that there are adequate resources for Socialism now which can be adapted. Marx and others maintained that capitalism produces a mere trickle of wealth. The essence of Socialism is to build up the productive forces. If the committee is going to work towards a new dimension of propaganda, I suggest they point out that the essence of Socialism is that we get rid of waste.

RESOLUTION CARRIED 17 - 4

ITEM 3

(a) Howlett (Camden): Referred to Camden's circular of 17th June on present method of producing pamphlets and stated that if the EC had vetted the pamphlet ITWMI, most of the errors and omissions might have been avoided.

Young (EC): Nothing but the reading of texts by the EC will do.

Donnelly (Glasgow): Terms of reference of New Pamphlets Committee have been adopted by Conference and because some members don't like them, they are bringing the matter up at every conceivable occasion. This is an abuse of democracy.

H. Cottis (Southend): Conference decisions are not for all time. Southend supported the NPC and we applaud the work they have done, but we now have misgivings.

D'Arcy (Camden): Conference wanted this method but there is a body of members who disagree with this. The NPC does not lend itself to speed and efficiency. No sense in a two-tier structure for short pamphlets and stock pamphlets.

C. Lovatt (Islington): This discussion is totally unproductive. It seems to be about personalities. We need more pamphlets produced efficiently. We are interested in propaganda. Errors can happen whether pamphlets read by Committee or EC - typing errors, even.

C. Moss (Swansea): It is a bit unfair to judge a new method by one mistake.

RESOLUTION - Donnelly (Glasgow) and Victor (N.E. Branch): "That this ADM is in favour of the NPC's terms of reference."

C. Slapper (Islington): Resolution unnecessary. There has been a lot of criticism - some negative. We need some positive counterbalance. A lot of good work has been done. The NPC's reply to Camden's criticism has been endorsed by the EC. Camden's position shows a lack of trust of the members who have done the work.

G. Kerr (E. London): New method adopted because old method said to be too slow, but ITWMI took a long time. Only way to ensure no embarrassment to members is to use old method.

May (N.W. London): N.W. London were opposed to the NPC as set up - its terms of reference. The EC endorsement of the NPC's reply to Camden has been overturned by this ADM moving to have an erratum slip prepared, not only to correct the incorrect date.

P. Deutz (E. London): Some problems were due to teething trouble but a lot were due to a particular climate in the Party. I think that has improved and I hope that will make for a smoother relationship between the NPC, the EC and branches. No-one is more embarrassed about mistakes than the person who makes them. We should give a good trial to a new method.

Cook (NPC/Birmingham): As well as criticisms of the NPC, in the last 10 minutes, there have been all sorts of criticisms made of the EC and these are the people who would be asked to edit pamphlets, were the system to be changed. Where is the logic of this.

Skelton (Central): Cause of delay in the past has been pedantic points. This could be got over by electing an educated EC. Inexperienced members of the EC have to have points explained to them by other EC members.

Goodman (EC): If we assume all the worst things about ITWMI, it doesn't mean the terms of reference were wrong. It might mean we had the wrong people on the committee. It is a first try. ECs take time to consider pamphlets partly because they have to carry on the normal administrative work.

Coleman (NPC): The committee accepts it has made mistakes. Pamphlets which have been edited by ECs have had erratum slips inserted. Camden also missed the error dealt with yesterday. Procedure doesn't matter too much either way - what matters is to try better next time.

RESOLUTION CARRIED 17 - 2

(c) H. Walters (Islington): Branch thought there should be something special about what we produce for the Marx Centenary and suggested republishing with sufficient modifications to the preface "The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years".

There was another view in the branch - that we should embark on something new, of lasting value - for example, a paperback book.

'Arcy' (London): This is a long pamphlet which could cost between £1500-2000. It is easily and cheaply available and we should break new ground.

Donnelly (Glasgow): Branch supports this idea. It is a collectors' piece with its introduction by McClatchie. Let's have a new short introduction to it. Could it be organised in time for the Centenary?

Coleman (NPC): Would like us to produce a leaflet on what Marx was all about.

Cook (Birmingham/NPC): Let us tie all our publications next year in some way to the Marx Centenary but have as many options as possible in front of us.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE: No discussion

PREMISES COMMITTEE: No discussion

PUBLICITY/MEDIA COMMITTEE:

C. Slapper (Islington): One or two items not mentioned in the report - discussion programme "Choices", and more recently, "Question Time", the producer of which has since stated they will not send us any more tickets. I have tapes of numbers of phone-ins when members phoned the programme, amounting to 8 hours. Recent debate on LBC is also on tape, when the Party had a representative. With permission would like delegates to hear the presenter's introductory remarks, and this was then heard.

Atkinson (General Secretary): Had given a brief summary of the Party's case and history to LBC when they had phoned prior to the debate. He felt there should be a written statement available which could be supplied to the media.

Coleman (EC): The Party takes too little interest in the media. Several members got together a few years ago and decided to see how much impact they could have by phoning-in. Branches should try getting on to their local radio when a meeting is being planned. It is possible to get some publicity and points across in this way.

C. Kerr (E. London): Tactical mistake made in appointing a Press Officer because it is far better for individual members to write letters. Also members would write and not assume the Press Officer was doing it.

ITEM 2

(b) Lennon (N.E. Branch): It is thought to be a good idea, but is it viable?

Victor (N.E. Branch): Computer could help with sorting out the geographical situation of Central Branch members, with record-keeping, and the shortage of storage space for Party records. It has not been thought out too much, but is open for discussion.

Valor (Glasgow): There is a great deal of space needed for the paper associated with a computer. Perhaps microfilm - would need less space.

Cook (Birmingham): I think we need a more detailed proposal.

McNeeney (Central): Good idea but not as an information bank. A simple processor could be useful for micro and floppy discs. During elections it would be useful. Is there anyone in the Party who has got a processor and could use their expertise etc.?

(c) E. Cottis (Southend): We wondered whether we should use papers other than the Guardian and New Statesman for advertising.

C. Slapper (Islington): There are papers suitable for particular meetings - e.g. where Islington is advertising its debate with the CP.

A. Gibb (Publicity/Media Committee): Sanity has brought in good replies and Peace News is another. Quite a few papers and magazines seem to be rising in circulation and we might get a good rate of response from those papers.

RESOLUTION - Cook (Birmingham) and Critchfield (Paddington): "This DM urges the Central Organiser to co-ordinate efforts of the Propaganda Committee and SSPC to produce a nationwide programme of events for Branches in 1983, the Marx Centenary year."

CARRIED 22 - 0

Donnelly (Glasgow): Perhaps a poster could be produced centrally, with a picture of Marx, leaving enough space for branches to print local details.

SOCIALIST STANDARD PRODUCTION COMMITTEE:

Donnelly (Glasgow): It is a good report and I am quite pleased with the SS.

May (N.W. London): Suggested that branches have not had time to read the EC's report to ADM - N.W. London only received their copy last Thursday.

Atkinson (General Secretary): Tried to be flexible and give sub-committees time to make their reports. Obviously over-generous and will be more rigid about this in future to get the report out earlier.

alters (Islington): Seems to be a discontinuance of notices of outdoor propaganda and SS should carry adverts for Party pamphlets more regularly.
White (Camden): Asked whether there was a shortage of material, or is material not published.
Criterfield (SSPC): Shortage of suitable material and at times a shortage of material. Members might express gratitude for the times when just a couple of members have written the SS.

RESOLUTION - May and Ross (N.W. London): "This DM strongly recommends the EC to ensure that a full list of Party pamphlets is advertised each month in the Socialist Standard, together with prices (inc. postage). Such an advert to be specially laid out and designed."

May (N.W. London): We made this suggestion to the EC and they passed it to the SSPC asking them to do so when space was available. We think there is always space for this. We need an attractively designed column and we should also advertise back-number SS.

Cook (Birmingham): We might include the free leaflets as well.

Criterfield (SSPC): The EC sent us a resolution and the Committee realised it had not advertised pamphlets as much as we should. I myself was stuck with the lay-out and at the time did not have an up-to-date list of all the pamphlets with prices and postage. The omission has been accidental.

C. Kerr (E. London): If shortage of space, omit some of the pictures.

Goodman (Secretary, SSPC): If branches send notices of outdoor meetings they will go in. Please send notices of meetings in good time.

May (N.W. London): I accept the SSPC's point but we don't have that many new leaflets. Could the list be made up for say 3 or 6 months at a time.

RESOLUTION CARRIED 26 - 0

ITEM 3

(b) R. Cox (Guildford): Some Companion Parties are having difficulties publishing a journal and the branch offered some ideas for discussion which had been produced as a circular. The SS, as a regularly produced journal, could be the basis of 'editions' for the Companion Parties. Several options for this, e.g. names of Companion Parties on front cover, or change in the title, reflecting world wide circulation. Provision could be made for gilded inserts for local items etc. etc.

Victor (N.E. Branch): Would there not be inevitable delays if there were increased distribution and the printing would have to be earlier so the topical nature would be less.

Hopwood (Croydon): Most articles are already suitable for world wide distribution, say Guildford, but in this month's SS there are only 5 items of world wide interest, the rest being purely local.

G. Kerr (E. London): The best way would be to do as the Guardian does - an edition in the north of England and another in the South. Main content would be the same but local articles.

Criterfield (SSPC): The SS became joint with the SP of I, but this was a flop when the SP of I did not contribute. The Committee has not discussed the new proposals.

May (N.W. London): Delegates must keep their feet on the ground here. It is as much as we can do to get an edition out for ourselves. Don't let's kid ourselves - there are only a handful of people in the WSP and no local activity. Distribution is a problem - I was sending WS to American libraries from England. The Canadian journal has hardly any circulation in Canada. We could ask members of Companion Parties to contribute articles for the SS.

RESOLUTION - R. Cox and C. Cox (Guildford): "This ADM recommends that the General Secretary write to all the English-speaking Companion Parties to ascertain their views on the possibility of adapting the Socialist Standard as an international journal and whether they might wish to participate in this project - the General Secretary to report back to the Party with this information before Conference 1983."

R. Cox (Guildford): Our resolution is put in order to canvas views of the Companion Parties. We are not asking for a decision to be made. The Canadian members are in favour of this.

C. Slapper (Islington): Branch is against this proposal as we favour an alternative one. Guildford's suggestion may be a step backward by swallowing up Companion Parties' own journals. We would suggest an international column in the SS containing something from the Companion Parties, and stimulate activity in those areas.

Walters (Islington): Seems to be a discontinuance of notices of outdoor propaganda and SS should carry adverts for Party pamphlets more regularly.

White (Camden): Asked whether there was a shortage of material, or is material not published.

Critchfield (SSPC): Shortage of suitable material and at times a shortage of material. Members might express gratitude for the times when just a couple of members have written the SS.

RESOLUTION - May and Ross (N.W. London): "This DM strongly recommends the EC to ensure that a full list of Party pamphlets is advertised each month in the Socialist Standard, together with prices (inc. postage). Such an advert to be specially laid out and designed."

May (N.W. London): We made this suggestion to the EC and they passed it to the SSPC asking them to do so when space was available. We think there is always space for this. We need an attractively designed column and we should also advertise back-number SS.

Cook (Birmingham): We might include the free leaflets as well.

Critchfield (SSPC): The EC sent us a resolution and the Committee realised it had not advertised pamphlets as much as we should. I myself was stuck with the lay-out and at the time did not have an up-to-date list of all the pamphlets with prices and postage. The omission has been accidental.

G. Kerr (E. London): If shortage of space, omit some of the pictures.

Goodman (Secretary, SSPC): If branches send notices of outdoor meetings they will go in. Please send notices of meetings in good time.

May (N.W. London): I accept the SSPC's point but we don't have that many new leaflets. Could the list be made up for say 3 or 6 months at a time.

RESOLUTION CARRIED 26 - 0

ITEM 3

(b) R. Cox (Guildford): Some Companion Parties are having difficulties publishing a journal and the branch offered some ideas for discussion which had been produced as a circular. The SS, as a regularly produced journal, could be the basis of 'editions' for the Companion Parties. Several options for this, e.g. names of Companion Parties on front cover, or change in the title, reflecting world wide circulation. Provision could be made for gummed inserts for local items etc. etc.

Victor (N.E. Branch): Would there not be inevitable delays if there were increased distribution and the printing would have to be earlier so the topical nature would be less.

Hopwood (Croydon): Most articles are already suitable for world wide distribution, say Guildford, but in this month's SS there are only 5 items of world wide interest, the rest being purely local.

G. Kerr (E. London): The best way would be to do as the Guardian does - an edition in the north of England and another in the South. Main content would be the same but local articles.

Critchfield (SSPC): The SS became joint with the SP of I, but this was a flop when the SP of I did not contribute. The Committee has not discussed the new proposals.

May (N.W. London): Delegates must keep their feet on the ground here. It is as much as we can do to get an edition out for ourselves. Don't let's kid ourselves - there are only a handful of people in the WSP and no local activity. Distribution is a problem - I was sending WS to American libraries from England. The Canadian journal has hardly any circulation in Canada. We could ask members of Companion Parties to contribute articles for the SS.

RESOLUTION - R. Cox and C. Cox (Guildford): "This ADH recommends that the General Secretary write to all the English-speaking Companion Parties to ascertain their views on the possibility of adapting the Socialist Standard as an international journal and whether they might wish to participate in this project - the General Secretary to report back to the Party with this information before Conference 1983."

R. Cox (Guildford): Our resolution is put in order to canvass views of the Companion Parties. We are not asking for a decision to be made. The Canadian members are in favour of this.

C. Slepper (Islington): Branch is against this proposal as we favour an alternative one. Guildford's suggestion may be a step backward by swallowing up Companion Parties' own journals. We would suggest an international column in the SS containing something from the Companion Parties, and stimulate activity in those areas.

- 12 -

Goodman (EC/SSPC): I am amazed by this resolution: the members have not asked the SSPC's views. How topical can it be when the deadline already for the SS is the 11th of the month. The idea is impractical from the time/topicality point of view alone.

Howell (EC): I did not expect such a "little Englander" attitude. Some suggestions would be at no extra cost. We have had some ideas from the Canadian Party. I don't know what the objection is to finding out things. A lot of journals are published at the end of the previous month for the following month.

RESOLUTION LOST 2 - 14

RESOLUTION - C. Slapper and McLeavy (Islington): "AIM recommends the EC to report to Conference 1983 on practical proposals for the publication of a twice-yearly international Socialist journal to be controlled by the Companion Parties."

C. Slapper (Islington): Suggested different types of article which could be produced as a twice-yearly international Socialist journal. It could perhaps be called "The World Socialist" and have an international editorial committee.

Coleman (EC): This is a well thought-out idea and could work. I would like to ask branches to seriously consider the report on the SP of Canada. I am in favour of acting as a world wide movement in the fullest sense. We could help ourselves by improving our propaganda. What May says about activity outside this country is absolutely right.

AMENDMENT - P. Lawrence and Hopwood (Croydon) "Delete 'twice-yearly'."

P. Lawrence (Croydon): We want to leave it flexible.

AMENDMENT LOST 6 - 7

May (N.W. London): Branches have already been asked to report their views to the EC by mid-November and delegates now are preparing to make a decision.

L. Cox (EC): Branch views on this proposal on the table could be ascertained along with their views on the report.

Hopwood (Croydon): I think the Companion Parties are not clear about our position here and think we are growing very quickly with a terrific amount of activity, and they may grasp at a straw and think we can do more for them than we really can do.

C. Slapper (Islington): We see this as comprising two aspects - what we can do to help and involve Companion Parties, and also having a theoretical journal. Conference seems to have been moving a little nearer having this kind of a journal and it could be a combined effort with the Companion Parties.

RESOLUTION CARRIED 18 - 2

S.S. DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE:

C. Slapper (for the Committee): An interim report has been prepared and distributed at this ADM. He asked for any suggestions.

PROPAGANDA COMMITTEE:

Simpson (S.W. London): There was no reference in the report to outdoor meetings at Earls Court.

McNeeney (Central): Asked what was the situation of the Marx Centenary lectures. He understood some members had boycotted these.

Coleman (Propaganda Committee): There has been no boycott as far as I am aware. They have been fairly well attended and the Propaganda Committee has reported on the arrangements. There has been no proper advertising; on several occasions the wrong meetings had been advertised; no collections had been taken, no handbills prepared, etc.

Atkinson (EC): There is no Marx Centenary Committee. Com. Young has done what he could on his own.

White (Camden): Is it possible to have a list of speakers who should speak at Hyde Park and speakers for lectures in branches.

Hopwood (Croydon): We seem to have two quite serious complaints. One about the organisation of outdoor meetings, and the other one the fiasco of the Marx Centenary lectures. What are we going to do about it.

D'Arcy (Camden): Camden raised the question of a speakers' list. We found members jumping up on the platform and we felt there should be a list of speakers due to speak. We had members who should not have been on the platform, speaking. It is to Com. Young's credit that he got the Marx Centenary lectures going. Basically it is a job for the expertise of the Propaganda Committee or someone else.

C. Slapper (Islington): The afternoon Hyde Park meetings have not been really

chaotic but
Marx Centenary
possible
Howell
Coleman
after
pro

chaotic but four to five members have turned up and worked out a rota. Two more Marx Centenary meetings are planned and it may be that the EC should cut out any possible further ones.

Howell (EC): There is no harm in speakers learning on the platform.

Coleman (Propaganda Committee): If D'Arcy has been attending Hyde Park on Sunday afternoon, he will have noticed there is always a member of the Propaganda Committee present. If he thinks a speaker inadequate, he should first of all inform the Propaganda Committee. Some of the members he refers to may be present.

H. Walters (Islington): The audience in Hyde Park has degenerated, but I have not witnessed what D'Arcy is suggesting.

MASTER FORM 'C':

Hopwood (Croydon): Asked for clarification of branch figures from Paddington and Birmingham branches.

RESOLUTION - Donnelly (Glasgow) and Cottis (Southend): "That the report of the EC be adopted."

AGREED

ITEM 5

(c) H. Cottis (Southend): There is a need for a Party guidebook in addition to the Rule Book. Some members join the Party and don't know much about it or the general set-up. It should help to get members involved.

Atkinson (General Secretary): This has been passed from my shoulders to ADM by a member of Central Branch approaching a branch. This is general information which Party members get to know when they join and circulate in the Party.

May (N.W. London): Branch is in favour: a lot of members do not circulate in the Party. A member transferred to our branch and did not know how committees work and what they did. It could be a single sheet of paper saying what the various committees were, etc.

L. Cox (EC): A previous EC had a letter produced for sending to new members with Rule Books. Perhaps this could be got out. It should have a little historical detail.

D'Arcy (Camden): Never heard such an infantile suggestion. We are dealing with people who have made a commitment to the Party, read the D of P etc. We should accept that we have intelligent people joining the Party.

C. Slapper (Islington): Branch generally in favour as it might be a general guidebook with emphasis on propaganda rather than rules, with information on running meetings etc.

McNagney (Central): It is worth spending a little time and trouble over. Terms of reference of Party Officers, sub-committees, standing orders of Conference etc. could be included. Some members don't know how to use a ballot form or know what an addendum, resolution or amendment etc., mean.

G. Kerr (E. London): If you can give new members some idea of what they can do in the Party, they could get writing and speaking.

F. Ambridge (Swansea): Central Branch members used to attend a meeting arranged by the Central Branch secretary at Conference: could this activity be continued.

(d) Grant (Islington): Spoke with permission of delegates. There has never been a formal discussion re official participation in members' funerals, although from time to time the Party has appointed a member to speak at such occasions. These could be marked with sensitivity. It has not been uncommon for a member to make an off-the-cuff speech with inaccurate references. We should have a committee whose task is to speak on behalf of members at funerals and generally advise in the handling of these occasions.

H. Cottis (Southend): We have been humiliated in Southend by a deceased member being buried with full clerical service. Some members have had recourse to the Secular Society because the families don't know how to proceed.

G. Kerr (E. London): Members should inform their family of their wishes.

Lestor (Central): Often a member's family does not want the Party to be there.

H. Walters (Islington): Where the Party is officiating and the family are Socialists, it is a deplorable state of affairs if the speech is inappropriate and does not reflect the member's life sincerely, or the Party's position in relation to it.

ITEM 6

(a) RESOLUTION - Hopwood (Croydon) and C. Slapper (Islington): "This ADM recommends the EC to consider the possibility of holding Conference somewhere outside London."

chaotic but four to five members have turned up and worked out a rota. Two more Marx Centenary meetings are planned and it may be that the EC should cut out any possible further ones.

Howell (EC): There is no harm in speakers learning on the platform.

Coleman (Propaganda Committee): If D'Arcy has been attending Hyde Park on Sunday afternoon, he will have noticed there is always a member of the Propaganda Committee present. If he thinks a speaker inadequate, he should first of all inform the Propaganda Committee. Some of the members he refers to may be present.

H. Walters (Islington): The audience in Hyde Park has degenerated, but I have not witnessed what D'Arcy is suggesting.

MASTER FORM 'C':

Hopwood (Croydon): Asked for clarification of branch figures from Paddington and Birmingham branches.

RESOLUTION - Donnelly (Glasgow) and Cottis (Southend): "That the report of the EC be adopted."

AGREED

ITEM 5

(c) H. Cottis (Southend): There is a need for a Party guidebook in addition to the Rule Book. Some members join the Party and don't know much about it or the general set-up. It should help to get members involved.

Atkinson (General Secretary): This has been passed from my shoulders to ADM by a member of Central Branch approaching a branch. This is general information which Party members get to know when they join and circulate in the Party.

May (N.W. London): Branch is in favour: a lot of members do not circulate in the Party. A member transferred to our branch and did not know how committees work and what they did. It could be a single sheet of paper saying what the various committees were, etc.

L. Cox (EC): A previous EC had a letter produced for sending to new members with Rule Books. Perhaps this could be got out. It should have a little historical detail.

D'Arcy (Camden): Never heard such an infantile suggestion. We are dealing with people who have made a commitment to the Party, read the D of P etc. We should accept that we have intelligent people joining the Party.

C. Slapper (Islington): Branch generally in favour as it might be a general guidebook with emphasis on propaganda rather than rules, with information on running meetings etc.

McNeeney (Central): It is worth spending a little time and trouble over. Terms of reference of Party Officers, sub-committees, standing orders of Conference etc. could be included. Some members don't know how to use a ballot form or know what an addendum, resolution or amendment etc., mean.

C. Kerr (E. London): If you can give new members some idea of what they can do in the Party, they could get writing and speaking.

F. Ambridge (Swansea): Central Branch members used to attend a meeting arranged by the Central Branch secretary at Conference: could this activity be continued.

(d) Grant (Islington): Spoke with permission of delegates. There has never been a formal discussion re official participation in members' funerals, although from time to time the Party has appointed a member to speak at such occasions. These could be marked with sensitivity. It has not been uncommon for a member to make an off-the-cuff speech with inaccurate references. We should have a committee whose task is to speak on behalf of members at funerals and generally advise in the handling of these occasions.

H. Cottis (Southend): We have been humiliated in Southend by a deceased member being buried with full clerical service. Some members have had recourse to the Secular Society because the families don't know how to proceed.

C. Kerr (E. London): Members should inform their family of their wishes.

Lester (Central): Often a member's family does not want the Party to be there.

H. Walters (Islington): Where the Party is officiating and the family are Socialists, it is a deplorable state of affairs if the speech is inappropriate and does not reflect the member's life sincerely, or the Party's position in relation to it.

ITEM 6

(a) RESOLUTION - Hopwood (Croydon) and C. Slapper (Islington): "This ADM recommends the EC to consider the possibility of holding Conference somewhere outside London."

Howwood (Croydon): Conferences can be held outside London. We have the example this summer of terrific organisation in Bolton for their weekend school. They arranged accommodation at far less cost than in London; hotels and food and drink were also cheaper. It need not be as expensive as people think. It would be a good experience for London members to go away from their home area and we might get a larger response from members to travel to somewhere in, say, mid-England. We should keep an open mind on this.

G. Kerr (E. London): One big snag is that over two-thirds of the membership is in London. Re accommodation - we have had difficulty in accommodating provincial members in London.

C. Slapper (Islington): 40% of membership is in London. It is very expensive for provincial delegates visiting London.

RESOLUTION CARRIED 14 - 3

The General Secretary informed ADM that for Conference 1983, we have booked the hall at Bedford House, as last year, with the addition of the upstairs lounge.

(b) P. Lawrence (Croydon): Everyone agrees this is a problem and there is no point passing items on automatically from one agenda to the next. One year, voting on amendments to rule at Conference was taken without discussion and this cut down the time factor a lot. We could reserve Sunday or some time period for Items for Discussion. Business drifts into the time available.

G. Kerr (E. London): When one delegate from each branch makes a report of activity, some take a long time. These reports should come last.

H. Walters (Islington): Branch making a number of suggestions. Items not covered at Conference should be automatically dealt with by some form of EC machinery. Conferences or ADMs could start at 9 or 10 a.m. each day. With regard to the Edinburgh item, reference to members' "hitherto acceptance..." is not worthy of support, and the wording in lines 3 and 5 is offensive and unnecessary.

D'Arcy (Camden): ADM used to be held on one day but was extended to two days because of items not being reached. Members would not come on Saturday morning, so we start at 1.30 p.m. We could try to get Conference back to three days.

C. Slapper (Islington): Those coming to London may find it difficult to get there on Saturday morning. We disagree with Edinburgh making a division between subjects. Delegates this year have not been speaking very much and some of them said they had not been fully mandated. Some items are rather obscure and with no backing circulars, it is difficult to mandate delegates.

ADJOURNMENT AGREED AT 6.15 p.m.